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TOWNSHEND.

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LOST AND FOUND.

LOST AND FOUND.

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LOST AND FOUND:

A Pastoral.

BY

J.^{John} CRAWFORD WILSON,

AUTHOR OF

"ELSIE," "FLIGHTS TO FAIRYLAND," "JONATHAN OLDAKER,"
"GITANILLA," ETC.

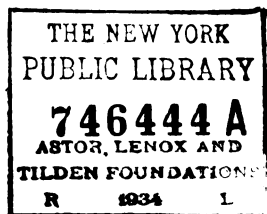
NEW YORK

1865

LONDON

WILLIAM FREEMAN, 102 FLEET STREET.

1865.



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To his

"Little Ones"

The Author inscribes this Volume

as

A Love-pledge.

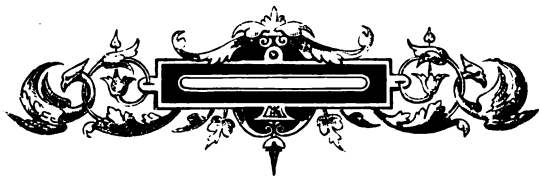


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LOST AND FOUND.

Proem.



BATHED in a shimmering flood of golden
light
The fertile valley lay, embowered in
trees,

Whose leaves, unthrilled e'en by a zephyr's kiss,
Slept in the lap of eve : through wreathing boughs
Stray rays of sunshine glanced, or flung the shade
Of mazy foliage on the spotless walls

Of vine-clad cottages—chiefest on two
Superior to the rest, with laurels hedged,
And linked by wreaths of intertwining flowers.
Twin-like in size and shape, built on a slope,
They to the west looked o'er the lovely vale
Through orchards laden with fast ripening fruit
And up the vista stole at close of day
The lingering glances of the amorous sun.
Panting—as 'twere—upon the stillness swelled
The church bell's voice, booming adown the dale
Blending in harmony with tattling birds
A diapason to the murmuring song
Sung by the streamlet to departing day.

Spanning the stream, that eastward had its source
Among the hills, o'er which the opening morn
Peeped first upon that scene, a rustic bridge
Far up the dell—by hoary grandsires known

As sacred to the love-sighs of their youth—
Still stretched its trembling planks on tottering
 piles,
One of which, loosened from its pebbly bed,
Lay prone, and formed beneath the bridge a weir
O'er which the streamlet brawled—thence hurrying
 on,
In shadows lost, or glittering in the light,
Its daily sermon preached—a type of Life—
For ever journeying to a distant sea,
Returning never—ever—ever on.

In that sweet valley, and on such an eve,
Wrapped in the sunset, sat two lovely girls,
Each with an arm twined round the other's waist,
Each shading with a hand her sparkling eyes
That turned half-blinded from the dazzling west,
Where—like a seething cauldron, bubbling up

With molten gold surcharged—'twixt earth and heaven
The sun sank slowly down.

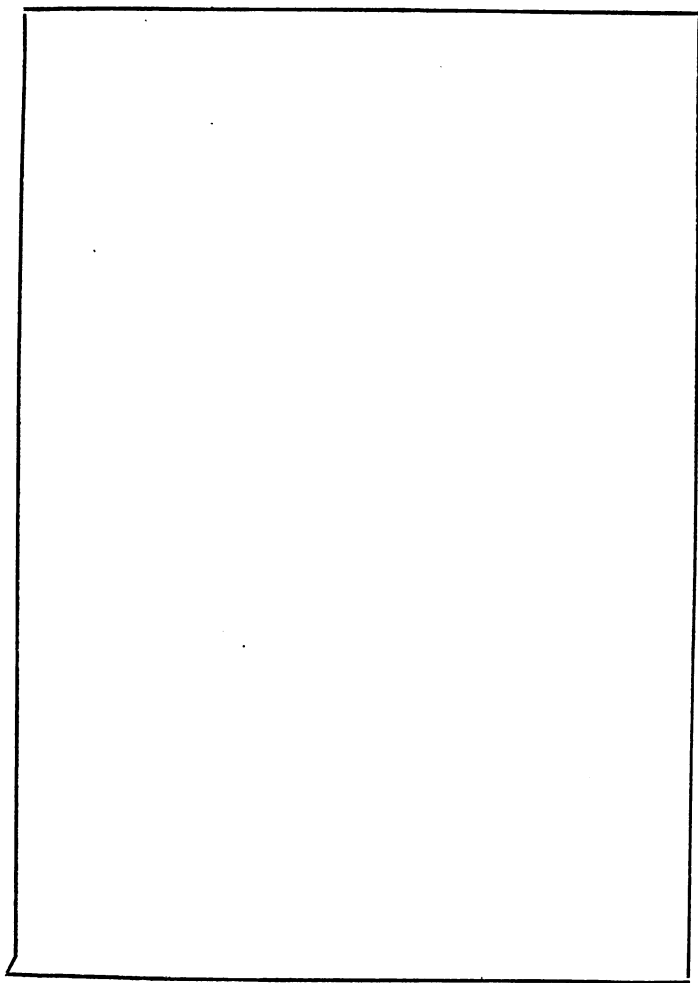
Not far apart

Watching the frame in which the girls were set—
A picture breathing from the Master's hand—
Stood two hale men, upon whose open brows
Health and content and comfort reigned supreme.
They spoke not of the sunset, nor the scene,
But through their eyes beamed forth upon the girls
The holy love, unknown to self and sin,
That for a daughter fills a father's heart.

I've seen that valley, and recall the time
When, at my mother's knee, I heard a tale
Still echoing in my heart. The distant west,
Far, far beyond the hills—the rippling stream—
The rustic bridge—each vine-clad cottage, too—
Nay, e'en the chiming of the old church bell,

Spring into act and hour—and with them spring,
At Fancy's magic touch, the forms of those
Who on that humble stage performed their parts
In the life-drama I would re-relate
She called it—"Lost and Found.'







Book the First.

LOST.



LICE and Anne,

Though not allied by blood, in hearts
were one—

Equals in years—daughters of life-long friends,
As life-long friends they grew—the parent stems
Proud each of both—both young and motherless—
Both lovely, though in beauty differing wide,
So wide that Alice was as “Daisy” known,
Whilst Anne was called “Wildrose.”

Daisy was fair.

Her meek pale face trellised with golden braids
Of Nature's mellowest dye. Her azure eyes,
Limpid with sweetness—beaming innocence—
Were but as stainless windows to a soul
Pure, and to pride unknown—saving that pride
Twin-born with modesty. Her winsome smiles
Lent her no grace that did not gain thereby :
Her voice was music—thrilling, sweet, and low,
It charmed all ears, but ravished his whose vows
With hers were interchanged, whose highest aim—
And his were many, none unworthy man—
Was to be worthy her, his soul's divinity.

But in Wildrose a haughtier beauty shone ;
Health kissed her cheeks, imprinting upon each
The rose red of her lips, its warmth toned down—
No hectic flush, like that at seasons seen

On Daisy's placid face, but shading off
Like the soft colour on a ripened peach.
Her sparkling eyes, through lashes dark and long,
Shot sunlight where she glanced. Ringlets of jet
Festooned her brow—each curl a hiding-place
For joyous love—a maze where hearts were lost—
And danced those curls, time keeping to the notes
Her blithesome laughter shed.

Wildrose was tall—

Taller than Daisy—yet were each alone,
Each would that happy medium height appear
Which fears not contrast with the short or tall,
But perfect seems 'twixt both. Daisy was slim,
Sylph-like, and with a footfall light as air—
A creature formed so fragile, that a breath
Harsher than Love's appeared too rude for her.
Modest, retiring, save where Pity called,
She was beloved by all—most by the poor.

Her hand was open as her means allowed,
Yet dwarfed beside her will ; and where she passed
The blessings of the stricken rose in prayers.
The fountain of her tears well'd near her heart,
So near, that pain for sorrows not her own
Would surging drown her eyes, making her seem
A weeping Niobé.

Wildrose was one

Whose cares were all her own. Her heart was
light

As shreds of thistle-down, and scarce more firm.
So much of it was Self, that none remained
To gild the temple in the which it lodged.
Where'er she passed, no tear of sympathy
Fell by the wayside, to bring forth in time
Of smiles its fifty or an hundred fold.
Admired, but not beloved, she seemed to all
A beauteous statue, full of earthly life,

But yet untouched by the celestial fire
That from her heart beamed forth through Daisy's
eyes.

Daisy was praised, but praises were to her
As strong incentives to deserve more praise ;
The harvests sprung from merits thickly sown.
None dared to flatter, for an o'erstrained word
Brought to her cheek the flush, and from her eye
A glance of mild rebuke, that checked the strain.

Wildrose was also praised, but praise to her,
Though ne'er so fulsome, pleased. Light as the vane
That turns with every breeze, she turned to all,
And, turning, courted flattery. Her eye
Lit up at compliment, her bosom heaved,
And o'er her face bright smiles of triumph played.
Her tax was laid on all ; but when unpaid

Her face in anger flushed, its smiles retired ;
Her flashing eye, her bosom's nervous swell,—
Nay, e'en the trembling of her pendant curls
Showed that a shadow passed between her heart
And that which formed its sunshine.

She was vain.

Say 'twas her only fault, what fault more sad ?
What subtler parasite than vanity ?
'Tis of all other faults the master one.
'Tis to the soul a trait'rous sentinel
That blabs the watchword, and that yields to bribes
The clue, that guides the foe without the walls
By paths least guarded, as though most secure,
Through some dark postern to the citadel,
Where sacred Virtue dwells. She once betrayed
By glozing words, or sinful compromise,
Flies from the tainted spot, and in her train,
Scared by the near approach of Vice unchecked,

The half-hushed echoes of whose steps they hear,
Fly Maiden Modesty and Virgin Pride,
Twin sisters by their mistress best beloved.
Ofttimes they linger, after Hope has fled,
By gentle Pity wooed,—but all in vain.
Virtue no more, where'er expelled, returns,
That goddess dwells not in polluted shrines.

Thus grew they out of childhood, blooming both,
Till reached the age of budding womanhood—
That stage on Life's highway when the fresh heart
First feels the quickened throb before unknown,
And bounds responsive to a glance or sigh ;
When to the soul some hidden power reveals
The magic charm that coils around young Love,
And sets it longing to uncoil the charm.
A task by nature given—a yearning wish,
Like that which led the steps of Her, the first

Of womankind, to the forbidden tree ;
Then urged her hand to pluck, her lips to taste
The fruit alone proscribed, of all that sprung
From Eden's favoured soil.

Wildrose was first
To loose the captive's bonds and plume his wings ;
But like a dame unskilled in falconry,
Who at a heron flies an untrained hawk,
Which swoops to seize but is itself transfixed,
Upon the wary quarry's upturned bill ;
So she her venture tried at one too high—
Her haggard aimed at game beyond its strength :
Striking—itself was struck—then to her breast,
Wounded and crushed, it fluttered, and there died.

Daisy, less free, less by ambition led,
Her charge in jesses held—no dizzy flight,
No sudden stoop, endangered her young love.

But once it soared—and then a silken thread,
So fine, so light, so long, so freely loosed,
So strong withal, unwound within her heart,
Holding him captive who a captive made
Of one who bartered with her Truth and Faith.

But at this point a change, a change in both—
Wildrose repellant, Daisy diffident—
Suspicious one, the other meeker grown.
Wildrose, at all times boastful of her power,
Austere with equals, insolent to those
Less blest by fortune's smiles, most pliant grew
When shone upon by rank. Like to the son
Of the Athenian artist, Dædalus,
She too on waxen wings was fain to mount
So high above her sphere, that once to fall
Would be to sink through Hope, and crush to earth
The pride that hedges Purity and Truth.

Daisy, unchanged, except when near her friend,
Wreathed Love with Hope, and hid the wreath away
Within a heart by cunning unprofaned—
A fitting temple for that life of life—
Across whose threshold thoughts unworthy Heaven
Ne'er dared to pass, for Virtue kept the door.

And here they parted upon Life's highway :
Each day a wider space betwixt them set,
For ever widening, as though each had ta'en
Divergent paths ; like to two travellers
Who from a river's source start towards the sea,
The stream, at first so narrow, never crossed,
But each on separate sides still journeying on,
Till friendship's bond, so firm when hand in hand
Strains in the distance to a spider's web,
Or shade 'twixt nothing, and a star's cold gleam ;
Then o'erstrained, snaps, recoiling on both hearts

With a keen pang—keenest by far on hers
Who saw, and pitied, but who could not save.

Edward, the youth to whom fair Daisy's heart
Was as an open book—no leaf turned down,
No page proscribed—was worthy of a love
Whose smile was hope, and every tone a pledge
A life-time must redeem—not lightly given
Nor lightly prized, but sacred held by both.
Sprung from an humble stock—nor rich, nor poor—
Whose lives through generations past had been
Unblemished—unreproached : he, too, fulfilled,
As well as erring mortal could, the last
And new commandment that was given to men.
A stalwart son of honest labour he,
Who reaped and garnered what himself had sown :
To God gave thanks, and to the needy alms,
With Daisy for his lovely almoner.

Thus fitted each for each ; rich in content,
And hope, and love ; with but a single want,
And that a want they could themselves supply—
A yearning to be one in name as heart—
They waited patiently the harvest-tide.
That passed, the scythe swathed up, the sickle by,
The hay-yard filled, the barn with wheat sheaves piled,
She, with an ample dower, built up by thrift,
Would to that much bring more, and to the house,
And him its owner, her angelic smile.

No lack of swains to Wildrose wooing came—
She walked amongst them like a gala queen.
Threw here a smile, and there a flippancy word,
Rejected this—that suitor praised and pleased ;
But round her breathed no atmosphere of truth,
All was unreal—empty—formal, all ;
If heat was there—'twas Passion's, but not Love's ;

If fire—some meteor's flash, no sacred flame.
The honest worship of an honest heart,
Born in her sphere—honoured, and well to do,
As Edward comely, and as Edward young,
With proud disdain she spurned. "He looked too
high,
She was a prize for one who owned the soil,
Not one who toiled and delved." Abashed and sad,
The lover went his way, crushed out his love,
And as he cast it to the winds of heaven,
She felt—despite her pride—a secret pang,
For in that moment on those winds was borne
The only incense that had burned for her
Upon the altar of a faithful heart.

The harvest came at length. With steady pace
Time, the untiring sentinel, who guards
The gloomy portal that leads forth from Life

To the dark deserts of Eternity,
Still held his silent way. The harvest passed—
The fields were reaped—and all the golden grain
As yet unthreshed, slept in their cots of chaff,
Built up in stacks, or piled within the barn.
And Edward looked to greet his Daisy “wife,”
When the next Sabbath bell rung out for prayer.

That Sabbath came, as had the harvest come—
But with it no rejoicings—all was woe.
No bride’s bright smile — no bridegroom’s jocund
 laugh—
No orange wreaths—no favours—naught but woe.
All sighs—all tears—all loss ; in ruins lay—
Blackened and charred by an expended fire—
The farm-house and the barn ; the sheds—the stacks
All prone with earth—all in a single night—
And with them all the hopes of two young hearts.

Edward and Daisy, hand in hand, surveyed
The wreck around them spread ; like two they
seemed

Who, from a summer's cruise, return from sea
Yearning for home. The harbour's mouth is passed
But as their anchor drops, their vessel strikes
Upon some hidden rock—down, down she sinks,
And with her all their wealth, or nearly all—
Whilst they, supported on the self-same rock,
Escape alone with life—all else devoured.

Time sows no seeds which bear so rich a yield
As shattered hopes—they multiply themselves.
Let one be jarred, the others tremble too :
E'en as a single ripple on the lake,
Caused by a pebble cast, fresh ripples forms ;
All perfect circles—circling each round each—
And each one larger than the one before.

'Twas thus with Daisy. This unlooked for
stroke

Was but the inmost circle—not the last
Rippling upon the surface of her love.
She in her hand a golden sunbeam caught,
Fresh as it darted from unclouded heaven ;
But when, to show her treasure to the world,
She oped her hand—no golden beam was there,
No trace of light, to prove that it had been.

Still Hope, though crushed, survived ; her modest
dower

She mildly urged, with care and trust in God,
Might bring them comforts in a lowlier home.
She looked beyond the cloud, for her young
heart

The diamond's virtue owned, and still retained
In all its darkness gleams of heavenly light.

Woes are half vanquished when they're bravely
borne—

So Daisy felt, and, yielding to the spell
Her love weaved round him, Edward felt so too.
Anguish, that like a huge funereal pall
Had wrapped him round, he boldly cast aside,
And with braced energies that dared to do,
Planned how a Future might be surest built
Upon the levelled ruins of the Past.

Though house, and barn, and stacks had been consumed,
His horses, cows, and sheep survived the fire ;
With these, and Daisy, and an honest heart
Bent by disaster, but unbroken still,
Resolved he rose to wrestle with the world.

Then fell the second blow. With purpose fixed

To share the Church's blessing, when their home—
A modest cottage rented from the squire—
Had been prepared from Daisy's little store
To shelter both, and each with hopes elate
Looked forward to that day—the news spread
forth

That he, the banker, in whose charge was placed
Her father's wealth and hers, had left their town
And beggared many, who had looked to gain,
By interest added to their fruits of thrift ;
But who instead had lost in that fell swoop
The savings hoarded for their rents nigh due—
For purposed purchases at neighbouring fairs—
For daughter's dowers—for premiums to put forth
To honest trade, mayhap a younger son ;
Or, as was oft the case, for wherewithal
To lighten labour at the close of life,
And scare the tyrant Hunger from the door.

Sad fell the stroke on all, but oh ! how sad
On her and him, so young, so doubly crushed.
The sword of flame, and iron hand of Fate,
Conspired to drive them from their Eden forth,
Unfriended, helpless, hopeless on the world.

Close upon this a keener sorrow fell,
For they must part at last ; and part they did.
Edward disposed of all the fire had spared,
And with the proceeds of what once had been
But needful adjuncts to his thriving farm,
Sought out in distant lands his stranger home.

Partings are ever sad, for sundered lives
Too often sever loves. New lands, new scenes,
New faces, friends, and hopes spring up anew,
And with the hopes, new ties, perchance new loves ;
For Love must be omnipotent to ~~veil~~ ^{veil} .

Through all the changes of a new found life,
With absence, distance, silence, spread between ;
A dreary desert, an unfathomed sea,
A blank in which affection's self is lost,
A chaos vague as is eternity.

 This Daisy felt ; within her heart of hearts
She hugged the fear, although their parting hour
Was all one dreamy picture of the time
So longed for in the Past—now thrice postponed,
Now further far removed than e'er before.
And yet she cheered him on—crushed back her sighs—
Robbed her own bosom of its buds of Hope
To give him strength to aid him on his way,
And faith to lighten up his dreary road.

 He, though the stronger vessel, felt and owned
How high her trustful spirit soared o'er his :

How abnegation of herself towered up,
And dwarfed his manhood into nothingness.
“Oh! what a prize,” he cried, “is woman’s love,”
As side by side they sat that saddening hour.
“My losses, disappointments, partings, all
Are cheaply purchased by an hour like this :
For now, alone, I learn thy real worth,
Thy truthful soul, and see in it the chain
That the Creator to his creature binds ;
And understand how man, of you a part
Are little lower than the angels made.”
“Think so, my Edward, ever,” Daisy sighed,
“And trust in Him through all—the only rock
On which no hopes are split—the surest stay—
The fastest friend in every time of need.
None are too high to be above His aid,
And none so low but they may share His smile :
As shines the sun on all, so He on all,—

Though 'tis not always sunshine—Wait and Hope.
As e'en the starless night gives place to day,
So sorrow ends in joy, if helped by Faith,
Which points through darkness to the coming morn.”
Then Edward, musing, answered, “Wait and Hope:”
“Will you, my Daisy, also Hope and Wait?
Hope for my safe return, and wait the day?”
“I'll wait and pray, my Edward; all my hopes
Go forth with you, so all my present prayers—
But prayers will still be mine, when hopes are gone.
Hopes crushed may live and bloom again, when
Time
Brings to their aid the sunshine of the heart;
Prayer ever lives—no hand can crush out prayer;
It calls a sunbeam on the soul from Heaven—
Shines through the thickest cloud, and brightest shines
When, like the fading rainbow, Hope dies out—
Therefore, my Edward, will I ‘wait and pray.’”

“All selfish I, and thou unselfish all,”
He moodily rejoined. “What right have I,
An exile from my home—all lost, save hope,
And youth, and strength, and fervent trust in God,
To trammel up your pure untainted love
Through worse than death? for death is certainty,
But absence, none—what rights have I to bind
What I must leave for years—what others seek—
Others, by fortune woo’d—not spurned like me—
Others, whose proffered hands point to rich homes
Where every comfort reigns? what rights have I?”——
But here a finger on her lips she laid;
Her hand his hand a trembling pressure gave,
And through her eyes looked forth on his a soul
That shrank, as tortured, from the doubt implied.
“I’ll wait,” she cried, “and hope—for ever hope—
Hope through the little ‘ever’ of my life,
And wait as well—my heart cannot be halved;

'Tis yours—and come again whene'er you will,
If it still throb—its throbs must be for you."

"Daisy, my own, my loved one," he replied,
"You are too good for me—yet not too good
If fixed determination in this heart
To prove its owner worthy of such love
May count for good: you are my guiding star;
Where'er I be my thoughts must turn to you,
From you to Heaven, and then from Heaven to you.
You said you'd 'wait for ever'—but not so:
I, too, must have my say. Wait but three years—
Three little months as we look back on time—
(Would we could count them in the Future so,
Where days seem years, and years long ages seem)—
Wait but three years—if then I've not returned
Nor tidings sent appointing time and place,
I hold you free—absolve you from your vows—

Retain no claim on you, or on your love,
That by a tear may not be wept away :
But I must barter for that little tear—
As tribute to a love that lived through life,
And with my latest breath soared up to Heaven.”

And so they parted. Edward crushed and sad—
A storm-struck oak, with branches trailed and bent :
Daisy—a daisy ever—meek, resigned,
A smile upon her face—a traitor smile,
That mocked the settled sorrow in her heart
And crushed it downwards, downwards to despair.
One kiss—the first and last they e’er had shared—
One sacred kiss, lingered upon their lips—
The echo born of his was, “Wait and hope ;”
Of hers, “The little ever of my life.”

Heavy and crushed at heart, in early morn,

When all around was light, and blithe, and gay,
When high in air the lark his matins sung,
And the bright autumn sun, forth from the east,
Behind his dazzling shield of molten gold,
Buoyed himself upwards through the azure sky,—
He towards the West commenced his lonely way.
For hours his shadow seemed to lure him on,
Whilst he, impatient, stamped upon the ground
As if to tread the tempter into earth ;
Then sat him down, and like an infant wept.
But when—the zenith passed—his shadow turned,
He, too, oft turned, and on the shadow smiled,
That every hour in wavering outline fell,
Longer and longer on the travelled path,
As if it woo'd him backward to the home
Where stricken Daisy sat disconsolate.
But no ! the staff was ta'en, the sandal tied ;
The road that led to Daisy's future home

Ran daily with the sun—so too must he—
Westward, still westward, weeks and months to come.

Amid the desert of her solitude,
Hemmed in by crumbled hopes, once built of sand
And now to sand resolved, fair Daisy sate,
Tearless, but oh ! how sad. On every side
Sand—nought but sand—a barren arid waste,
A plain unbroken by a single palm,
With no oasis to relieve the void,
Not e'en a withered shrub to shade a hope,
But all a blank, a wilderness of woe.
Widowed ere wived, her life a waking dream,
In which her spirit sank, for ever sank,
No sudden start breaking the leaden spell
To prove 'twas but a dream, but down, down, down,
All dark, all rayless, and all desolate.
Still to the west her eyes at early morn,

At noon, at eve, at night were meekly turned ;
For there the sun of all her life had set,
'There too she daily buried all her love ;
But in each sunset saw not on the sky
Resurgam, photographed in golden fire.
Another blow !—one outer circle yet
Surged on the dead sea of her blighted life.
Another link in Sorrow's lengthening chain
Dragged her yet nearer to the fatal verge
Which overhangs Despair—her father died ;
Not sinking into earth weighed down by years,
Nor swept by sickness from a thriving home,
But by reverse of fortune, nipped and seared ,
Thrust out of life, a victim to the fraud,
That to the winds of heaven blew Daisy's hopes,
Exiling Edward, and with him her smiles.

Wildrose, in person as in heart, estranged,

Had gone—no one knew where. No farewell word
Softened the parting hour—no friendly tear
Fell, as a tribute to a friendship lost;
For when her loss was known, poor Daisy's eyes
Had long forgot to weep. 'Twas at the time
When, like a bubble on a mountain stream,
Or fleecy cloud before the northern blast,
Her little dower had melted into air,
And she and Edward felt that they must part.

Thinking of ills that weigh another down
Lifts not a settled sorrow from ourselves,
Rolls not the stone aside from off the heart
Within whose depths fond hopes are sepulchred.
But it may teach us there are crushing griefs
By others borne, which we could never bear.
That what we deem o'erwhelming dwarfs beside
The piled up mountains of a brother's woe.

Daisy of Wildrose thought, spoke not, but thought
And thinking ever grieved ; for she believed
That e'en her ringing laugh was half a sob
And half a lie, the whole a mockery,
Sad as the jingling of a sick mime's bells.
That her gay smile, so radiant once and bright,
Was but a specious mask, a shadowy tomb,
Masking the grave of many a buried sigh,
Mayhap the grave of Virtue dug by sin.
This last she often feared, and side by side
With her own settled grief this sorrow set ;
But in the contrast saw how much she gained,
How much poor Wildrose lost. She had no guilt
To crush her anguish down, and still be hid,
To play the tyrant, eat into her soul,
For ever hungered, like that obscene bird
That on the vitals of Prometheus fed ;
A living canker, never, never still,

A thing of fear, a waking incubus,
A horrent ghoul, a worm that never dies.

At length a chapter in the Book of Life—
A YEAR—was writ and turned, with all its notes,
Its beauties, and its blots, its joys, its pangs,
Omissions and commissions, smiles and tears,
Its virtues and its crimes,—was writ and turned.
A record of the Past no time can change ;
Of which no second issue can be made ;
No old edition for its faults recalled
To be revised, improved,—for ever turned ;
Caught up, and bound in the eternal tome
Of all our deeds, the faithful chronogram.

Autumn on Edward's footsteps crept away.
Then hoary Winter flung his snowy shroud
Upon the pinions of the north-east wind,

Fettered the limpid waters of the stream ;
His frozen breastplate on the lake outspread,
And pendant set on boughs, on cottage eaves,
And jutting cliffs, transparent icy cones,
That like to fairy towers inverted, shone,
Gleaming like crystals in the sun's chilled beams.
Then Winter passed, howling his own death dirge,
And yet no news of Edward or his fate.

Spring, with the infant year, half smiles, half tears,
Skipped o'er the breast of earth, within whose womb
Lay vegetation chained, and loosed her bonds.
Freed from their galling gyves, the lake and stream,
Tore down the pendant ice cones from the trees,
And in their places hung out sprouting leaves
That vernal chaplets weaved, to crown the buds
Which welcomed Summer, wreathed in perfumed
flowers ;—

But with the flowers no western sunbeam came
To kiss the dew-drop from sweet Daisy's face.

Summer sped on—each morn her praise was sung
By feathered minstrels warbling forth their souls.
Noon 'neath her feet a sea of sunbeams spread,
Rippling in golden waves. The Sun himself
Rose earlier to his race, and later set
As if he grudged the hours behind the hills
When Cynthia held her watch, and to the stars
Were flung the clear notes of the nightingale.
The winds of heaven played with her golden hair ;
The wings of sportive zephyr, fragrance shed,
Stolen in the night-tide from the sleeping flowers.
Her lap was filled with plenty ; Nature's stores
Were lavished at her feet, a fitting dower
For coming Autumn's fair and beauteous bride.
Then Autumn came—her life flowed into his,

Blent with it, and became of his a part.
The thrifty housewife, Harvest, brought her gifts,
Rich votive offerings tendered unto both,
The first and last fruits of the pregnant fields.
Blossoms that lived in Summer's virgin days
Exhaling odours,—in her wedded prime
Put off their bridesmaid robes, and clustering hung,
Bending the branches of the orchards down,
Meet presents yielded by our Mother Earth.
All things looked glad, bright, gay, and cloudless all,
Bright, gay, and cloudless, as that day they were,
When, just a year before, one heart was halved,
Or two that throbbed as one. Daisy's still beat
Sadly and slow, for no responsive pulse
Quickened the movement of her sober blood ;
All still was silence, doubt and sadness all.

Wildrose had not returned ; but a stray tongue—

One of the thousand Rumour idly wags—
Had blabbed a story, Daisy felt was false.
It said that Wildrose lived, a wedded wife,
The honoured mistress of a wealthy home,
Far from her lonely father's humble cot ;
Lived on the banks of Thames, within the sound
Of busy London's ever ceaseless hum.
One other felt so too, yet dared not speak,
Dared not upon his offspring fix the brand
That stamped her wanton. Yet within that year
His form had bent, his locks had turned to gray ;
His voice had failed him, and his downcast eyes
Were seldom raised, save when he knelt to Heaven.
And when he knelt, no eye save His alone,
Who is ALL-SEEING, read his settled grief.

When Daisy's father died, another home
Opened its doors, and bade her enter in.

Long, long she paused through lonely weary weeks,
Selfish in sorrow, jealous of her woe.
At last she entered, for she daily saw
Upon its threshold, him her father loved,
Bowed down, though not with age, who mutely sighed,
“Orphan, be daughter to a childless man.”

There then they lived until a second year
A second autumn brought, but tidings none
Of Daisy's other self. Day followed day,
A chain of disappointments, every link
A lingering longing, chequered by no joy ;
A sinking out of life, each night renewed.
The name of Wildrose, once the *sessamé*
To ope a father's heart, was heard no more.
None dared to utter it when he was by,
Not even her who read his every thought,
And saw upon his heart, as on a tomb,

In bleeding characters that daughter's name.
Saw too this epitaph beneath it graved,
"She died to me, when she to honour died."

One day a letter reached their lonely home,
But not for Daisy. How her heart upheaved,
How shook her hand, outstretched to take it in ;
How sank that heart again, how fell that hand,
When in the superscription she perceived
Her second father's name—alas ! not hers.

Since Wildrose left, no letter cheered their gloom.
So Daisy's longing ever built for her
The fixed belief, that when a letter came
It must from Edward speak, and speak to her.
That hope, like all her others, crumbled too.
Such disappointment would have crushed some hearts,
For it was huge ; but she had lived so long,

Such years of anguish in each single day,
So meekly sitting at the feet of woe,
That were one hope to be by chance fulfilled,
Fulfilment would the disappointment be.
The letter was for him who was to her
All that a father to a child could be—
To him she gave it, and in haste retired.

Oft was that letter turned, the writing scanned,
The superscription read, ere broke the seal.
It seemed as if the old man inly feared
To look into the secrets locked therein.
At length the page lay open to his gaze,
A long fixed gaze, as though the written words
Were basilisks that robbed his eyes of sight.
Daisy stood mute, then raised her suppliant hands,
And sank upon her knees. Her woman's heart
Saw and felt all—felt for the daughter lost—

Felt for the just inexorable sire,
Who chained himself a martyr to the stake,
Bursting the heart, misfortune could but bend.

"Our father," Daisy sobbed. "Thy father? yes!"
"Our father." "Thine, not hers," he sternly said.
"That letter, father mine." "'Tis from the grave.
Forget the sender." "Oh! why not forgive?"
"My curses ——" "Father, hold!" she wildly cried.
"Wrest not from HIM, the Father of us all,
The thunders of a curse. Remember well
What with His finger He upon the ground
Wrote when the woman caught in guilty act
Was brought for doom—'Let *him* that has no sin
Cast the first stone at *her*.' A father's curse
Is as the avalanche a dwarf may free,
But giant hosts cannot again replace."
The old man hid his face, and from his eyes,

Through wrinkled fingers, tears fell trickling fast ;
His bosom heaved, and forth half choked by sobs
Struggled the words, " I will not curse my child."

" Forgive her, father. Say that you forgive,"
Was Daisy's urgent prayer, as to his side
She crept still kneeling, and upon her breast
Pillowed his drooping head. " Forget ! forgive !"
" Had she but been like you," he sadly groaned,
" Patient, resigned like you"— " Speak not of me,
Speak not of me, my father ; think of her—
Your flesh, your blood, your soul's most inmost soul ;
Born of your manhood, grafted to your age.
She is God's charge to you. You're pledged for her,
And pledged for her to HIM, who will not brook
That e'en a silver talent should be hid."
" Had she but been like you," again he groaned,
Swaying him to and fro, and on the fire

Fixing his steadfast gaze, as though his ears
Heard not the music of her sweet low voice.
“ Had she but been like you, content to dwell
With those who loved her in my humble home ;
Content from equals to select her friends ;
Not lured away by gauds, but meek like you—
Humble like you—like you content to call
Her father ‘ father ;’ not like you, to blush
Because his hands were hard with honest toil,
His manners such as fitted his estate,
Her lover one like yours”—— But here a cry
Piercing and wild escaped from Daisy’s breast,
Startling the old man in his waking dream.
“ Oh ! speak not so, conjure not up such thoughts.
Say, had I been like her, flattered, admired,
Tempted and lured from home—caught in the web
That Vice for Beauty weaves—taught to believe
My smile a prize for which all suitors sighed,

My slightest word a boon—were I like her,
And not the simple, homely girl I am,
Like her, I might have erred—like her have said
That which was said by him, for whom was killed
The father's fatted calf. Forget—forgive—
Hark to the swelling storm—the mighty voice
Of HIM who rules it mingles with the blast.
Upon the sky, as at Belshazzar's feast,
He writes in characters of dazzling fire.
List to His thunder's roar—when He withholds
The bolts upraised to crush us, why should we,
Dwarfed pigmies that we are, cast upon those
Already crushed the vials of our wrath?
Forgive her, father—say that you forgive.”
“I do forgive, as I would be forgiven”—
He said, and helpless sank: the crumpled page
Fell from his nerveless grasp, and in the fire
A single instant blazed. One moment more,

And Daisy snatched it forth ; regardless she
Of the sharp pang caused by the circling flame :
All charred the letter, save a little space
On which was traced, " At ten, upon the bridge
Which spans the mountain stream, half-crazed I'll wait
You, or my death—two deaths ;" and that was all.
" No day, no date," sighed Daisy ; " help me Heaven !
Here by my side, a helpless stricken man ;
There, with no clue to time, a maid distraught,
Swaying 'twixt life and death—'twixt heaven and hell,
Teach me my duty, first of all to him,
Her father, also mine, and then to her."
So saying, Daisy rose, and through the storm
To her next neighbours ran. Her earnest call
Need not be repeated. Swift they came
To aid the broken man. The doctor, too,
Whose skill, if but co-equal with his will,
Would call the dead to life, was quickly there.

To him and them she left him ; though without
The tempest raged with unabated force ;
Though through the hurrying clouds the lightning
 flashed,

And, 'twixt the flashes, pealed the thunder's roar ;
Though from the heavens, as if their flood-gates burst,
The torrents gushed, drenching the earth and her ;
Though the wild driving winds, like hell-fiends loose,
Shrieked round her form, and dashed her cloak aside,
Wrenched out her tresses from their simple band,
And lashed them, steeped in moisture, in her eyes,
She towards the distant bridge held on her way,
The still small voice within her whispering, " On,
Well done, thou good and faithful servant, on !"
She reached the margin of the stream, but there
In floods it roll'd, drowning the beaten path,
And through the howling storm she heard the bell
From the church spire boom forth the hour of ten.

The rustic bridge was, by the lightning's flash
A moment lit ; then all was dark again—
When, hark ! a shriek ! “ Lost, lost, for ever lost ! ”—
A plunge—a puny cry—and all was still.
Just then a struggling moonbeam kissed her feet :
Soft was that beam—soft as the glistening tear
By sleeping beauty shed—when from the lid,
Through lashes mingling in a close embrace,
Like liquid diamond it an instant gleams,
A spirit dewdrop sparkling. Drifting by,
Forced by the hurrying stream towards where she stood,
And silvered by that moonbeam, Daisy saw
Within her reach white foam, or something white.
Hopeful she clutched it fast, to find the hope,
Like all her others, fled. “ Wildrose,” she shrieked,
As from the seething flood she, in her stead,
Caught up a gasping babe. On swept the stream ;
Still were the clouds by dazzling lightnings riven—

Still, 'twixt each flash, the thunders crashed and
boomed,

Yet there stood Daisy, peering through the void,
Clasped to her heart that tiny shivering waif—
That sinless fruit sprung from a sinful love—
That God-breathed soul snatched back from death to
life.

“Wildrose,” she cried, “Wildrose, thy babe is found!”
The howling blast caught up the plaintive wail,
And in distorted echoes whirled aloft
The one word, “Found!” Oh, hideous mockery!
For on her ears rang out a wild heart shriek,
“Lost!” and the gibing echoes chorus’d “Lost!”

END OF BOOK THE FIRST.



Book the Second.

FOUND.



UTUMN again, again, and yet again,

Three years had flitted by. Five years

in all

Since on the hopes and heart of Daisy fell

One huge eclipse. Five dreary years to her.

The first two sad, but lighted up at times

By the sweet sympathetic smiles of those

Around whose sorrows she had often shed

The halo of her love. The last three dark,

Unlighted by those smiles ; for busy tongues
Had whispered scandal, and the hand of scorn,
Or worse, of pity, stretched a finger forth
Pointed at her, whilst idle gossips spoke
Of a third dweller in that peaceful dell—
That third a baby boy, just three years old,
Who called her “ Mother.”

Hard was Daisy's lot —
And this suspicion hardest far of all ;
For though a word could clear her, yet she felt
That if 'twas spoken, it would murder him,
The broken, childless man, whose heart and home
Had both been opened wide to lure her in.
He read her thoughts, as propped up, day by day,
He in his old arm chair, silent and sad,
Helpless and hopeless, sat, awaiting him
On the pale horse by John at Patmos seen,
Who bears God's final summons to all men—

Stillling the throbbings of the tortured heart—
Smoothing the pillow for the restless head—
Clearing the dark path for the weary feet,
And gathering tiny flowers, too pure for earth,
From which he gently shakes the cumbrous dust,
To plant them blooming in their native heaven.

Upon the morrow of that day of dread
When Daisy saw the old man stricken down,
Forgiveness on his lips—heard, too, the cry
That rang in echoes ever in her ears,
“Lost, lost, for ever lost!” she by the bed,
Where life lay blent with death, took up her watch.
The neighbours sought their homes, to come no more,
For Daisy bade them “Go.” Meekly she spoke,
But firmly ; so they went—each wondering—why?—
Each certain that some secret lay bound up
In the sharp stroke that crushed what was a man,

Sweeping the wreck aside from life's highway.
But more, in Daisy's absence on that night,
When the wild tempest seemed to drag down heaven,
And heap its cloudy ruins upon earth.
Her pale face, too, her haggard worn-out look,
When she with thanks dismissed them, all were marked ;
Conjecture reigned at every gossip's board.
"She looked so ill," said one ; "So thin, so pale,
With lips so bloodless, and a voice so faint,"
Another dame rejoined ; "She trembled, too,"
Chimed in a third ; "Mark you how weak she seemed ?"
Questioned a fourth,—and then they all agreed
There were good grounds on which to build surmise.
But soon surmise was lost in certainty ;
One, bolder than the rest, had since that night
Crept 'neath the cottage eave, and, creeping, heard
Within the house a cry—a baby's cry ;
Then all was clear—all was at once explained.

Her paleness, weakness, illness, absence, all :
She was a mother, and to hide her shame
Shut out her friends, concealed herself away,
And by the bedside of the broken man—
Whose passive life was but a breathing death—
Fondled the offspring of some guilty love.

Poor suffering Daisy ! how her crushed heart bled ;
How huge the cross she had been called to bear—
A cross on which was daily crucified
Her gentle spirit. Ever one dread fear
Hung o'er her like a black funereal pall ;
A cloud surcharged with horrors, which, when burst,
Must crush her into earth—one giant fear
She knew she walked 'neath heaven a living lie,
Felt it, and hourly thought, " Should Edward come,
I must be still a lie—a lie to him.
To breathe the truth would be to fix the brand

Of murd'ress on my new found father's child.
Self-slaughtered in her frenzy, she has passed
From earth to plead before her Judge and mine.
Although the infant lives, yet was her act
A deed of crime, and I must hide the deed,
Or, with it, thrust in a dishonoured grave
The patient good old man ; o'eturn the lamp
Before the oil of life is all burned out.
No, no ; I'll suffer. Suffering is to me
So close a comrade, that one more embrace,
Closer and sharper, cannot matter much.
My neighbours, once my friends, now pass me by,
Or look upon me as a guilty thing.
They were my shadows in my noon of hope ;
Now in its night, they all have passed away.
Hush ! does he call ? my father ! No, he sleeps,
Or slumbers rather. Does some spirit-voice
Whisper soft words of comfort to his heart,

And tell him I am true? Peace! baby, peace!
Break not the sacred spell. Hush! lullaby!
That drooping eyelid, lifted by a tear,
Tells of returning consciousness—of hope.
The lid is closed—the tear has rolled away.
It shall not plead in vain. I will be firm.
HE who reads every heart looks down and sees
What is bound up in mine. HE blames me not;
I feel it, and can say, 'Thy will be done.'"

And thus resigned that gentle martyr lived;
Nor knew she then that Wildrose had not died.
Wildrose still lived, faded and changed, but lived.
Thus chanced it:—When the howling storm died out,
And o'er the scene, high in the courts of heaven,
The clouded moon walked like a widowed queen,
Veiled, and in tears, amid the starry throng,
That like to weeping maids of honour seemed,

Two men, at midnight, crossed the rustic bridge,
And saw beneath it, partially upheld
By the prone pile that checked the sullen stream—
Forming thereat the mimic waterfall—
And part submerged, a female, motionless.
On the black tide, her upturned face appeared
Like alabaster in an ebon frame,
Whilst o'er the weir, borne downwards in its fall,
Her jetty locks contrasted with the foam,
Forced by the eddying waters to its base,
As might a raven nestling with a swan.
They bore her to the village, and from thence
Some few hours later, she, unknown to all,
Was to the county hospital conveyed ;
For no one dreamed to seek in that poor wretch,
Half-scared, half-drowned, the Wildrose of the dell.
There for some months, to all around reserved,
With more of fear than sorrow in her heart,

Unloved, she filled a social blank—no more—
Dead to old haunts, her conscience, and her friends.

Autumn had well-nigh passed. Zephyr's light wing
Chased the last shadow o'er the waving corn ;
The breast of earth was bare, and in the barn
The noise of busy flails, thud following thud,
Rung out a chorus to the winnower's song.
Still as a sleeping infant on the breast
Of some fond mother, slept the peaceful vale,
Encircled by the mountain's sheltering arms.
But later in the morn that valley caught
The first faint blush of the uprising sun ;
And earlier in the west that sun sank down,
Tinging the sky that curtained his repose,
Not with a golden, but a crimsoned dye.

One evening, in the twilight, Daisy sat,

As was her wont, beside the old man's chair,
Whilst at her feet, or toddling to and fro,
For ever prattling in his joyous mood
Of nothings—for of nothings are made up
The early babblings of the man to be—
The infant, big with self-importance, played.
She sat and read—read from the Book of books
The oft-read sermon preached upon the Mount,
In which 'tis said, "Blessed are they that mourn."
"Blessed are they that mourn," again she read,
When, with a frightened cry, the trembling child
Rushed to her side, and clung around her knees,
Hiding his face beneath the sacred tome,
And sobbing wildly, "Mother, there! look there!"
"What frights my darling?" Daisy softly said,
Whilst in her heart she felt a sudden chill,
A deeper sinking than e'er felt before,
And towards the darkening lattice cast her eyes.

"Some one has scared the boy—some one looked in."

So spake the old man in disjointed words,

For as his limbs, his words were powerless now.

"I felt a shadow too—felt it and paused—

Re-read of them 'that mourn,' but did not read

The promise full of comfort," murmured she,

Drawing her closer, and with her the child,

Till both were wrapped in his encircling arms.

The twilight passed ; the moon shone sweetly forth ;
Like phantom ships in an ethereal sea

The night winds spread their thin transparent sails
Studded with gems—as through the clouds the stars
Twinkled and gleamed, the daisies of the sky.

But in the arms of Daisy of the dell,
And on her lap, the pretty orphan kneeled,
His little hands upraised, his eyelids closed,
Praying the prayer of childhood—words, mere words,

But words, that, like the grain of mustard-seed,
Tower into stately trees in after life ;
Grow with our growth, and strengthen with our strength ;
Bud into language fitted for our wants,
And bring, when death draws nigh, and to all else
The ear is dulled, the early lullaby,
The mother's voice, the long-forgotten prayer,
That fades in music, fading but to swell
Into the endless chorus sung by those
Who waft the soul into eternal day.

“ God bless dear mother ; bless grandfather too ;
And God bless him so very far away ;
God bless me too—forgive us all our sins.”
Then Daisy said, “ Amen ”—when, hark ! without,
Startling the slumbering echoes with their tones,
So deep, so sad, so tearful burst they forth—
“ Amen to that—forgive us all our sins.”

“Edward!” shrieked Daisy, starting to her feet;
“Edward! ’tis Edward’s voice, if Edward lives.”
“’Tis Edward’s voice,—but who and what is that?
O Daisy! have I loved and lived for this?
Must my own ears and eyes prove Rumour true?”
And there, within the door, her Edward stood—
The strong brave soul, that fought the fight with fate,
Shrinking within itself, and shrivelling up—
His brow the dial upon which were cast
The gloomy shadows gathering round his heart.
Daisy stood mute—clasping the shrinking child,
Who hid his head upon her trembling breast—
She could but look; yet piled up in that look
Were all her loves, her hopes, her joys, her fears,
Her sorrows, her despair. He saw it not,
Or read it not aright; for drowning tears,
And choking sobs, and comfort-blighting sighs
Rose ’twixt them twain; and to his wavering sense

Her soul distorted seemed—like Beauty's form
Reflected in a dark perturbed lake—
Pure and impure—guiltless and guilty too—
Most fair—most foul—and on her breast that blur,
That plague-spot, in his eye—that frighted child
Whose lips so lately prayed, and prayed for him.

Still stood she mute—transfixed. Her tender heart
Bled inly as she gazed upon his face.
Less for herself she suffered than for him,
Whose past seemed all a wild fantastic dream ;
Whose future crumbled like the Dead Sea fruit.
Too oft the cup was shattered at her lips
To move her wonder then ; too oft she'd stood
Upon the melting ice, and sank to rise
Reft of some cherished hope, to faltering fail.
“Duty,” she sighed, “my duty must be done ;
Oh ! give him strength to bear what crushes me.”

“That child?” again he said, in sterner tones,
“What does he there?” “Mother, O mother dear!”
The infant cried, twining around her neck
The tiny arms so weak; and yet so strong,
That as he clung she felt her strength renewed,
And closer hugged him to her bursting heart.
“Say, is he yours?” His broad chest sank and heaved
As though within its depths were caged the fires
That rend the womb of earth. Then Daisy spoke,
Meekly as when she sighed that long farewell,
But did not speak to him, though on his face
Her eyes, like pity’s own, gazed mournfully—
“Whose baby-boy are you?” “Yours, mother, yours.”
“You hear him, Edward;” then she mildly said,
“If you must question further, pray you go;
This hour, long hoped for, and, oh! too long feared,
Has burst on me at last. So, pray you, go.
If I have erred, I am not worthy you;

If you have doubts, you are not worthy me.
So, pray you, Edward, go. I love you still.
That is no crime—I count it not as such ;
Yet, as I am but human after all,
’Tis best you go. The spirit may be strong,
But, oh ! the flesh is weak—I feel how weak !”
For the first time she wept, and on her knees
Sank slowly down, imploring aid of Him
Who, with the trials, sends the sufferer strength.

Edward looked down upon her kneeling form,
And saw the infant kiss the tears away—
He loved the child for that. In bygone years
Her smiles were his—her tears were all her own.
He never saw her weep—never till now ;
And now first seen, he felt that all the smiles
That in perennial blossom, decked her face,
Were beggared by one tear. Something so pure

Lives in a tear. It is the mightiest sword
A woman's heart can wield. It severs forms—
'Tis truth itself ; for e'en in lies it lives,
And shows the lies confest. It represents
The feeling uppermost—or vile or pure.
Oh ! there is virtue in a glistening tear.

Edward still gazed, and felt, were he that child,
He'd live and die for her. He clasped his hands,
And in them hid away his burning head.
“Daisy,” at length he cried in rending tones,
“What have I done to be o'erwhelmed like this?
Hurled, without hope, into a gulf of woe?
You were my bosom's banker—to your care
I gave my heart, my hopes, my only love.
For you through years I toiled—to you I looked ;
You were my cynosure—the one bright star
By which I steered. You brought me back to you ;

See, here I am. Oh! give me back my heart,
My hopes, my life, my first and only love ;
Let not that look proclaim me bankrupt now.
Speak, Daisy, speak ! Did I not hear you say
That, doubting you, I were unworthy you?
I was too rash ; for yours is not a frame
In which those souls are set that cherish sin ;
Lift up your eyes—dare they not look on me?"

"Daily they look to heaven, and nothing there
Bids them look up no more ; then why on you
Should they not upwards look?" So Daisy spoke,
As lifting up her eyes she fixed on him
The old fond gaze, so truthful and so pure—
The gaze that dreams, the painters of the night,
Had often pictured in his loneliest hours.
"Then speak. Oh! speak," he cried, "in mercy speak ;
I stand upon the brink of weal or woe ;

They are the balances. One word from you
And I am lost or saved. That child—that child—
It is not yours? Say but a simple word—
Or Yes, or No—and I am marred or made.
Perchance 'tis hers? Wildrose! though not like her—
Say, is it so?" The "Yes," half uttered, hung
On Daisy's eager lips. Her heaven was near—
One word, and death, or worse than death, was past,
When, hark! a door adjoining opened wide,
And in the doorway stood the stricken man,
Clad in his night gear, looking upon her
Who called him "father," with a daughter's rights.
"Mine, mine," she shrieked, "he's mine!" as to her
feet
Swiftly she sprung, and, pointing to the door,
Waved him away. "On earth we meet no more,
In heaven we must; for you are true and good.
Go, Edward, go; by all our early love—

By all I suffer, and by all you feel,
I conjure you to go ; speak not, but go.
Nay, and you loiter. I must then command—
Go ; 'tis our house, my house—the child's, my child's.
Go, Edward, go !”

And Edward sadly went ;
Passed through the door—she closed it, and, when
closed,
Sank senseless on the ground, deaf to the call
Of him who could not help—now twice a child—
Deaf to the cry of him, the baby-boy ;
And so for hours she lay. Then morning came,
And with the morning life, and with the life
A sense of duty done. Then Daisy prayed,
And having prayed she slept. Ere day was done
She moved about her home her former self—
Still weak, still patient. All the past was dead ;
A living future rose before her eyes,

Where she should meet with him, and he must feel
That daisies crushed on earth, may bloom in heaven.

Edward went forth, and for the first time felt
A void within his heart—its motive gone.
He walked as in a trance, now here, now there ;
But as the sunflower, turns it to the sun,
He in his dreamy rambles ever turned,
Pausing where he set forth, before the door
That shut him out from her, and locked in love.
He felt himself a wreck—a Samson shorn ;
And in her uttered words, “ The child—*my* child ! ”
Heard the loud ringing of Delilah’s voice.
Again he wandered, circling from the spot,
Crossing the rustic bridge. Above his head
The azure dome of heaven, spangled with stars,
Looked like a concave gemmed with angel eyes,
Sparkling for him—but yet he marked them not :—

Saw only Daisy, and with her "the child."
The murmuring brook warbled its tuneless song—
He heard it not ; heard but the words, "my child !"
Still circling—by the old churchyard he passed,
Where, like the ghosts of those beneath the turf,
The tombstones, silvered by the crescent moon,
Kept silent watch ; he looked, but heeded not.
The cottage was to him the living tomb
In which was buried hope. Still on for hours,
Till one by one the angel eyelids closed,
And, with the breath of morning, came the glow
Of the exulting sun ; his golden rays
Shot first to heaven, then o'er the mountain tops,
Dived through the valley—yet he felt them not ;
They did not shine on him, who knelt, heart crushed,
Palled in dark shadows by that cottage door.

A week passed over, and again he stood

With Daisy face to face : a placid smile,
Mayhap a sunbeam, for a moment played
Softly on hers—it had been, but was not ;—
His, grave and stern, unlighted by a smile ;
But midst the furrows anguish ploughed therein,
A sense of injured honour proudly strove.
His ears had not been closed ; on every side
The mouth of scandal breathed its venom forth.
He drank it in, reluctantly at first,
But soon reluctance tottered and gave way,
Till for the poisonous draught he learned to thirst.
Sated at length he rose, resolved once more
To see her—fling her wild rejection back,
Absolve her of her vows, recall his own,
And leave the vale for ever.

Thus they stood,

Both silent, sadly gazing each on each ;
A cloud of doubt his side—duty on hers ;

Both victims—she to duty, he to doubt.

First Daisy spoke : “ You come to say farewell.

I feel it in my heart, and from it say,

God bless you, Edward !” “ Yes, to say farewell ;

Or ill, or well, it matters not to me.

What heeds the oak, when by the lightning riven,

That lightning’s after-course. I was the oak ;

You breathed upon me, and, lo ! here I stand

A scathed and blighted statue of myself.”

Through firm clenched teeth at first he slowly spoke,

Then louder, wilder, fiercer swelled his tones.

“ To say farewell, a last and long farewell—

If farewell be forgetfulness eterne ;

To end your syren song, long sung to me,

Release you from a love you never prized,

Recall my pledge, and let the wanton free.

You bade me ‘ Go !’ I go, but cast you off,

Foul plague-spot of my life, most lovely fiend—

Dark subtle devil, with an angel's face—
Fondle your sin, and, if you can, repent.”
Daisy had clasped his hand, clung round his knees,
To stay his withering taunts, but all in vain.
In the harsh words that hissed upon her ear—
The feverish breath that burned her hectic cheek—
The restless blood-shot eyes that glared on her—
The rude rebuff that hurled her to his feet,
She, shuddering, saw the throne of reason reel—
The deed, her deed, a very deed of Sin.
“Edward!” she shrieked, “return—I’ll tell thee all;
I am a thing to pity, not to spurn.”
But, frenzied he, rushed from the cottage forth.
Swift to her feet she sprang, “Return, return!”
The prayer unheeded fell—it came too late;
And when she looked to find him, he was gone.

Pale as a statue, and as motionless,

Fixed to the spot, as by a wizard's spell,
Daisy stood mute—her hands advanced and joined,
Her head half raised, her body partly bent
In piteous supplication, and her lips
Parted, as though arrested whilst they spoke ;
Strained towards the rustic bridge, her glassy eyes
Peered with lack lustre gaze. That way he went,
As one might go who wanders purposeless.
But yet he never turned—not once looked back.
Onwards, at times with a desponding mien
And drooping head, he wound his tortuous path,
Drunken with grief. Anon a lengthened cry,
A torture long drawn out, burst from his breast ;
His ears had heard a something—not a sound
Nor echo e'en—less palpable than both—
But yet a something breathing forth “ Return ”—
Mayhap the whispering of an angel tongue.
He thrust his fingers firmly in his ears,

And ran as Christian did in Bunyan's dream.
In vain, in vain ! they shut not out " Return ;"
They locked it in, " Return, return, return !"
He plucked his fingers forth, rushed o'er the bridge,
Beat with impatient arms the soothing air,
And as he passed away, by foliage hid,
The murmuring stream seemed to wail forth his words.
Zephyr caught up the dirge, and on its wing
Wafted it gently o'er the lovely dell,
In, through the cottage porch on Daisy's ear ;
She heard and echoed it, 'twas " Lost, lost, lost !"

Thus blow on blow, each weightier than the last,
Fell dead upon her heart ; no slight rebound
Letting its music ring. 'Twas as a gong
Muffled, and beaten with a leaden weight ;
The silvery notes were there, but the same stroke
That gave them being, crushed them in their birth.

That night, when hushed in sleep the infant lay,
Daisy beside its grandsire's bed knelt down,
And begged the blessing that she nightly shared.
Then as she rose to seek her lonely couch,
Softly he spoke, "Blessèd are they that mourn."
"If they be blest that mourn, I should be blest,"
Was Daisy's mild response. "And thou art blest,
And shalt be comforted," in firmer tones,
And with prophetic voice, the old man said.
"Go, go, my child, 'tis given to me who stand
Upon the verge of life, where life and death,
Like sea and sky, so blend, that each seems each,
Or both—both death and life—life born of death—
Death a short night of sleep, from which the soul
Wakes up refreshed in an eternal day—
'Tis given to me to see beyond the cloud
That hems my Daisy in, and there I read,
Exultant hope, 'THOU SHALT BE COMFORTED.'

She kissed his cheek, and meekly went her way.

Weeks passed ; a month—two months ; then Christmas came,

A hoary priest to shrive the dying Year,
And bear again “ Good tidings of great joy.”
A jocund priest, whose message was all love ;
God’s message to His creatures upon Earth—
“ Good tidings of great joy”—all love—no hate—
No fear—“ Fear not—good tidings of great joy”—
“ Peace and goodwill to men”—the chorus sung
By choiring angels, to those “ keeping watch
Over their flocks by night.” So Christmas came—
Cheered Earth, and went, and with him passed the
Year.

Spring once again—and then a ray of hope,
The first for years that glanced on Daisy’s heart,

Gleamed for a moment—gleamed—and then was
gone,

Buried beneath a mountain cloud of woe.

News to the valley came, that, wronged by her,

Edward—his reason lost—for weeks had lain

An inmate of the County Hospital.

Stricken by fever, too, he hourly raved

Of Daisy and old love—ever of love ;

The past reality was all a blank :

That there, unknown, save by one skilful nurse,

Who seldom spoke,—and never of herself,—

His brave soul trembled in the balances,

Swaying from death to life—from life to death.

One danger past, another wrapped him in ;

A settled gloom took up the fever's watch,

And midst that gloom, as in a murky cloud,

Returning reason sat, hugging her grief,

Keeping him sleepless, to whom sleep was strength.

Daisy knelt down, and prayed to Heaven for him,
And for the patient Nurse, whoe'er she were,
That by him kept her watch ; whose tender hand
Moistened his burning lips, cooled his racked head,
And smoothed the pillow on the which it tossed.
Oh ! were she there, a pillow should be his
That the most watchful Nurse need never turn—
One that would heave or sink to give him ease—
A breathing pillow that would breathe for him—
Could never tire—be his, and his alone,
Whilst life was hers—his also in the grave :
A spotless pillow, on the which had slept
The orphaned babe, unconscious of a crime—
“ One of these little ones ” of whom He said,
“ Forbid them not ” — “ Ye do it unto me : ”
Yes, on her virgin bosom he should rest,
Pillowed more softly than on yielding down ;
Soothed, too, by childhood's songs—till, danger o'er,

She might unknown retire, and be once more
The modest, meek, retiring girl she was.

Her second father saw her as she prayed,
And heard her prayer. He knew her gentle heart,
Its strength, devotion, and long-suffering love ;
Knew that in that small tenement of clay
Was housed so much of heaven, that all his house
Was wrapped in peace, as though the ark were there.
With the new year, new strength had come to him ;
No longer helpless, he from room to room,
Yea, to the cottage porch, could move alone,
Propped by his oaken staff. With the new strength
Returned his former power to think and feel ;
And as he thought and felt, he looked on her ;
Forgot the selfishness that always clings
To waning manhood, and that firmest clings
When helplessness succeeds to manly power.

He entered from the porch. Daisy arose,
Upturning for his kiss her placid face :
Then as he sat him down, she by his chair,
Half kneeling, half reclined, took up her place,
And on his knee pillowed her aching head.
Thus had they often sat, silent for hours,
Her eyes on his, his fixed on vacancy ;
He thinking—when he thought—upon the past ;
She longing ever for the time to come.

At length he spoke, and whilst he spoke his hand
Rested upon her head—that little head
Crowning so large a heart. “ Daisy, my child,
’Tis meet that you should go. I read your thoughts.
They’re written on your brow in lines of pain—
’Tis meet you go. Nay, speak not—I know all.
Go, seek your other self—atone our sin—
My sin and yours—for we have deeply sinned ;

I doubly, to have let him harbour doubt.
Confess the truth, but yet not all the truth."
The old man paused, and hid his face in shame.
" May Heaven forgive me if I err in this,"
He muttered through his sobs. She said, " Amen !"
" Confess a truth—but, Daisy, need I say,
Spare her—the lost one—our poor withered Rose ?"
She answered not in words, but to his heart
Her heart upreared—her arms the living bonds
That held them close, whilst pulse to pulse replied.
" Now go, my daughter. Say the baby-boy
Is of no kin to you. If he refuse
To give you credence, I must go to him—
Must speak with him, alone, before my God ;
Then shall he kneel to her who knelt to him."

So Daisy left the dell, and sought the town,
Where breathed her breath of life—the dying breath

To which she brought new life. Ecstatic joy!
Joy never felt till then—to meet his eyes,
Look into them, and say, “I’m worthy you ;
Our sorrows all are past ; you are my care ;
Take me, my own, and mould me to your will :
My heart is cast in yours—yours is the die—
Mine, but what yours impressed. The artist’s skill
Gives to the pliant wax a life-like form ;
To change that form he must destroy the cast,
And melt the wax anew : mine was to you
The virgin wax to which no form was given
You stamped it with yourself—efface the stamp,
And you must break the heart.” So Daisy felt
As through the streets she passed, radiant with
love ;
Her buoyant heart, unfettered in her breast,
Blithe as a long-imprisoned lark, when freed,
And soaring upwards, big with song to heaven.

Heeded by all—yet heedless she of all,
Pressed onwards to her goal—her heaven on earth.
The clouds had passed away, and the bright sun
Shone on her—in her—through her, as she moved,
Pure gold without alloy—gold that had stood
The sternest of all tests, misfortune's own ;
And from the fiery crucible came forth,
Chaste as a soul could come, which had not yet
Put off the dust of our mortality.

She reached the hospital ; before its gate
She paused to check the flutterings of her heart :
Vain task ! It fluttered more ;—so long—so long
Had it been held in gyves—so long estranged
From what it felt was home—that other heart,
It—like a new-caged bird that sees the sun,
And blinded by his light, sees not the bars
That shut out Liberty—still strove to soar,

But in each effort failed—yet panting still,
Still struggling to be free—still caged remained.

At length she entered, and inquired for him,
Long convalescent, but not yet restored
To health and strength, though verging fast to both.
Those who received her listened whilst she spoke,
And questioned thrice, whom she desired to seek,
So ravished were they by her silvery voice—
So struck with admiration by her mien—
So awed before the magic of her eyes—
So humbled by the meekness of her face,
Which might have passed unchallenged into heaven.
And thrice she told them ; yet no pettish tone
Revealed the wrong she felt they passed on her,
Or seemed to pass. Then one forthwith withdrew
To seek the sought one out. Another prayed
That she would sit and rest. A third discoursed

Of the bright early Spring, though in a guise
Soliciting response. A fourth detailed
The illness of her friend ; yet all spoke low,
As though they dared not break the sacred spell
That chained them round the spot on which she stood.
She had declined the seat with modest grace
So charmingly her own, that each one felt
That e'en to be denied by such a tongue,
And such a smile, were to be favoured much.

The messenger returned, and led the way
Through doors that closed, almost without a sound.
"The public room was not a place for her,"
So said her guide. Another was sought out,
She entered it, and, lo ! there Edward stood,
Cold and impassive, as if hewn from stone.

She would have rushed all fervour to his breast ;

But his repellant air, and folded arms,
His lowering brows, and piercing scornful gaze,
Struck back her love in ice-blocks on her heart,
Congealed her blood, froze up her fount of tears,
Shackled her tongue, and left her motionless.

Oh ! cruel, cruel fate ! could this be true ?
Was she abhorred of him she loved so much ?
For whom the morning of her life was spent,
And so far spent, that now its noon was night ?
Yes ! so it was. She read it in his eyes.
No voice was needed to proclaim his hate—
It burned into her soul like molten lead,
Hissed, and grew cold amid its deadly chills.

He saw and marked her—but his jaundiced eye
Read all things wrong : and yet he pitied her.
He could not crush the thing he meant to spurn—

To brush from out his path. So sadly spoke :

“You sought me—and have found me—would you
more?

I have been sick to death—that deed was yours.

I longed to die—another bade me live—

Would you that I should die? So would not she—

I live, and live for her—what would you more?”

His first stern look dug out a grave for hope—
His uttered words piled mountains o'er its corse.

“What would I?” Daisy faltered; “nothing now.”
There was a tremor in her low response,
As if her spirit wrestled with her words,
And would, with them, be free. “What do I here?
I came to say, what must be never said—
No—never—never—never—never now,
Or it would make your future, like my past.

I can but pray for you, and pray for her ;
May she be worthy you—and may you both
Live through a lengthened life of happy days,
The worst more happy than the best of mine !”
She turned to leave—then paused, and slowly said :
“ If for the sake of what I dreamed was love,
I might one favour crave, it would be this—
That when all bounteous Heaven has given to you
A baby-girl, you’ll call her by my name—
Not Alice. No ! whate’er her mother will,
But sometimes call her Daisy, for my sake.”

He answered her, “ I will.” She passed the door.
He rushed to call her back—but nature failed.
Exhausted on the ground the sick man sank ;
And, as he sank, he felt a gaping void,
A dismal blank within his inmost heart,
As though all virtue had gone forth with her.

As in a waking dream Daisy passed forth,
A settled sorrow stamped upon her face—
That face a desert now—its smiles burned up.
Those who a space before hung on those smiles
Drew back, and gave her way. None dared to
speak—

All gazed in pity on her beauty's wreck,
And saw the lovely vision fade from view.

She reached the dell, but how she never knew;
Doubtless some angel was her sorrowing guide.
The old man stared aghast. Questioned in vain—
To all his questions she replied, "Lost, lost!"

Weeks flitted by ere consciousness returned;
Then Summer came, and Daisy once again
In all, save smiles, appeared her former self.
She who was once all smiles, now smiled no more.

The smiles had turned to tears, but all her tears
Were meekly shed, and not repiningly.

That blow was deadly. Could it be the
worst?

What in the mighty armoury of heaven
That failed to crush out life, could that surpass?
Was there another yet to fall on her?
Yes! there was one—the thunderbolt itself—
That, like the sword of Damocles, still hung
Suspended by a hair above her heart—
That hair by vivid lightnings circled round.

Edward had long been ill, but still survived.
The parting with his Daisy, hurled him back
To fight with death his tedious fight anew.
Once more he conquered, and, all danger o'er,
The morrow's sun must light him to the church,

And wed him—ere he seek his distant home—
With her, the nurse, who wooed him back to life.

He loved her not, but yet he owed her life.
None knew her friends, her parentage, but him—
None knew her heart, save God, and she herself.
She was not all a saint, nor all corrupt :
So told him she had sinned. He bade her cease ;
She had not sinned to him—owed him no pledge,
No plighted troth, no long embosomed love—
She must be his. The ashes of a love
Most pure—most sacred he had gathered up
And offered them to her.

That morrow came.

Loud o'er the vale a merry peal was borne ;
The village church was decked with blooming flowers ;
The village beauties, jealous of a bride
Unknown, unnamed, crowded the sombre pews.

The gossips, too, were there, regretful then
That she so kind to all in bygone days
Was not the happy fair. Young men who knew
And followed Daisy, humbly with their eyes,
Yea, would have given their hearts to call her theirs,
Deserted labour on that sunny morn
To catch a glimpse of her, who, in her stead,
Was to be Edward's wife. Old gray heads, too,
Who loved her father, and had looked on her,
The fairy of the dell, as though she were
A part of it and them, assembled there—
All expectation—yet all sad and stern.
The bride and bridegroom entered. Every eye
Glanced first at her, all veiled ; and then at him,
So wan—so pale—so sorrow-struck—so old !

Daisy had heard the merry marriage peal,
That, like a knell, rang out her own death dirge.

She knew it pealed for him, and fain would see,
Herself unseen, the happy, happy bride.
The old man had gone forth, she knew not where ;
But now he often whiled the hours away
From morn till noon, and ne'er till noon returned.
She could steal forth unnoticed—nay, she must—
A something urged her on—and yet the boy,
She dared not leave him. No, he must go too ;
And so she went, and with her went the boy.

She reached the village church, so thickly thronged,
And stood within the porch, hidden away
From every eye within. She saw the bride,
But did not see her face—'twas turned from her.
Saw also him, the idol she had reared,
Whose image passed too oft 'twixt her and Heaven ;
Then knelt her down and prayed, clasping the child,
The cause of all her wrongs, so close, so firm,

To her poor throbbing breast, that he cried out,
"You hurt me, mother!" She kissed off his tears,
And laid his head upon her bleeding heart,
Hushing him gently with a lullaby.
She heard the voice of him, the man of God,
And joined in each response. Heard, too, his voice,
Which still made music in her saddened ears ;
And then a third—a female voice—the bride's,
A voice that thrilled her with electric force ;
Severed the hair that held the pendant sword ;
Loosened on high the threatening thunderbolt,
And hurled it downwards on her fated head.
Aghast she stared—sprung to her feet, erect,
A breathing petrification—nothing more.
Up the thronged aisle her frenzied eyeballs glared
Up, to the altar foot, and there she saw
The dead returned to life—the lost Wildrose—
The guilty mother of the frightened child,

Plighting her troth to him, whose troth was hers.

“Just Heaven, forbear!” she groaned, “for you are
just ;

Or if you will that I should thus be crushed,
Give me the strength to bear—to feel my heart
Torn out, and trampled 'neath another's feet.”

She paused. All then seemed hushed—hushed as
the grave—

When, lo, another voice burst on her ears ;
The voice indignant of the just old man :
Loud over all it rose. It filled the church,
Swelled 'neath the roof, and through the portal surged :
“Wouldst lay a second murder on your soul ?
Wanton, where is thy child ?” A piercing shriek
From one within—the bride—burst high and shrill.
“Air—give her air !” was chorused by the throng,
Who saw and heard the marriage unfulfilled.

“Air—give her air!” Past Daisy, through the porch
They bore the stricken figure of Wildrose ;
“Lost—lost, for ever lost!” she wildly cried ;
“Murdered by me. Lost, lost, for ever lost!”
When, hark ! another voice—soft, low, and sweet
Thrilled on the ears of all—’twas Daisy’s voice,
Not jubilant, but sad. “Found, found, Wildrose !
Thy baby-boy is found ! Behold him here—
Heart of the heart of her whose heart is thine—
Thy sister’s love—the Daisy of the Dell !”





Conclusion.



Y Mother's story's told. Years died away,
And in that same churchyard two children played,

A lovely girl and boy ; beside them stood

A comely lad of ten ; he watched their play—

Watched also, bending o'er a simple grave,

The parents of the three—for he was theirs,

Though never born to them. The mother's eyes

Rained tears upon the grave ; but they were lost

In daisy clusters that above it bloomed.

There was no stone to mark who slumbered there ;

But at the head, by which their father knelt,

Blossomed a pale Wild Rose.

HOME.





HOME.

"**I** MUST go Home to-day!"—



A golden beam
Of dazzling sunlight streamed from
heaven to earth ;

Through clouds that seemed like polished silver domes
Of temples angel-built, or fairy towers
Spotless and white, with sparkling minarets,
Drifting like icebergs in a calm blue sea,
The fiery shaft ran down—down to a bed
On which lay prone a little wasted form

Of faded earth, from which the struggling soul
Yet panted to be free.

It was a girl—

A little sickly girl lay on that bed—
To whom God's sunbeam came. She saw the beam—
But to her eye of faith 'twas not a beam—
'Twas a bright golden stair with myriad steps,
All small—all suited to her tiny feet—
And leading straight to Heaven.

“ I must go Home—

Not a short holiday, my mother dear,
Like those I've had from school—from school to
Home,

And then from Home to school: the Home so short,
And, oh, the school so long! but always Home;
And it will be to-day—must be to-day.”

“ My darling is at Home!” the mother sobbed,

As with a moistened feather she essayed
To damp the parchèd lips, round which the dews
Shook from the wings of Death, thronged cold and
clear.

But in the eyes through which that spirit looked
A soft denial shone ; and the small voice
Pleaded in whispers to that mother's heart,—
“ Oh ! do not keep me here—let me go Home ;
I'm very tired of earth—I long for Home ;
I'm weak and ill, and only fit for Home—
And such a Home, sweet mother!—there—'tis there!”

She smiled within the sunbeam, and her hand,
Like it, transparent seemed, as it was raised
Pointing to Heaven. A Heaven not for away—
But near ; so near—that e'en her dying smile
Seemed not to herald night, but the bright dawn
Of an unclouded and eternal day.

The mother felt, as kneeling by that bed
She tended every want, and on her breast
Pillowed the sufferer's head—that the frail shell,
The young worn mould encircled by her arms,
Was crumbling fast to dust—and that the wings
Of a freed angel would be heavenward spread
When earth's last gyves fell off, and the last sigh
Followed the sunbeam, sent to light her Home.

They called her "Lily"—Lilian was her name—
But from her birth she seemed so waxen white—
So fairy slight—so gentle and so pure,
That to her father's mind she ever brought
The image of that pale and fragile flower :
And so he called her "Lily." 'Twas a term
In which endearment, tenderness, and hope
Were all wreathed up ; the hope too often crossed
By jealous fears, when some untoward breath

Too roughly bent to earth the sickly flower,
Leaving it drooping on its yielding stem.

And there she lay at last,—almost in Heaven—
Of Time and of Eternity a part—
A dying, living link, uniting those
Who live to die—and die to ever live !

Her eyes were closed. Her mother thought she
slept

The sleep that wakes no more : but 'twas not so.
A step was on the stair—the fading eyes
Opened again on earth—the wasted cheeks—
Dimpled once more, as round the lips a smile
Played like the shadow of a silver cloud
Upon a sunlit stream. “ Mother ! 'tis he –
'Tis father's footstep—and so very kind—
So thoughtful of his Lily, he has left

His heavy boots below ; he pauses now—
Clings to the rail, and sobs. I hear it all !
He fears I am gone Home. Go, mother dear !
Tell him I could not go till he returned.
I want to feel his kiss upon my lips ;
And take it up to Heaven.”

Another sob,
And then a choking whisper from without.
“ May I come in ? If she is gone, say ‘ No.’
If not, say ‘ Yes.’ I’ll tread so very light—
I shall not wake her, wife. May I come in ?”

A faltering voice said, “ Come !” ’Twas Lily’s voice ;
So he went in—a stalwart lusty man—
A giant, with a tiny infant’s heart,
Weeping big tears that would not be controlled.
Oh ! how he loved that child—how she loved him !
Yet both so opposite ; her little soul

Clinging round his—a tendril round an oak—
A lily cleaving to a rugged rock.

He sat beside her bed, and in his hands
Buried his streaming eyes. His soul rebelled:
“She had no right to die—to rive his heart;
Rob him and it, of all life’s tenderest ties.”
He felt as he could say, “Lily, lie there
For ever dying; but, oh! never die
’Til I die too.” He thought not of his wife—
She was his other self. She was himself;
But Lily was their cherished life of life—
Of each and both a part—so grafted on,
That, if removed, they must become once more
Two bodies with two souls—no longer one,
Their living link destroyed—not loving less,
But singly loving—’twixt their hearts a gulf
Unbridged by Lily’s love;—a love so pure

That not a taint of selfishness was near:
All this he felt, and on the future looked
As on a desolation.

Lily spoke—

Or whispered rather—but a thunder peal
Would less affect him than her sinking tones:
“Raise me, dear father; take me to your breast—
Your broad kind breast, so full of love for me—
'Twill rest me on my road—'tis half-way Home!”

And then he rose, and round her wasted form
His brawny arms—before whose mighty strength
The massive anvil quivered, as his hands
Swung high the ponderous sledge—or in whose
gripe
The fiery steed stood conquered and subdued—
Closed, as the breath of heaven, or God's own
love,

So lightly, softly, gently, hemmed they in
The little dying child. Then there he sat,
Her face upon his breast, and on his knee
Her tearless mother's head ; for all her tears
Were inly wept, dropping like molten lead
Upon her breaking heart.

Far in the west
Long waves of crimson clouds stretched o'er the
hills ;
And through those clouds, as in a sea of blood,
The sun sank slowly down. Ere his last ray
Glanced upwards from the earth, the father felt
His Lily lift her head—celestial light
Beamed from her eyes, as for the last embrace,
She to her mother turned, and then to him :
“ They beckon me,” she said ; “ I come ! I come ! ”
Around his neck she twined her faded arms,
Rising obedient to her heavenly call ;

Again he pressed her lips, but in the kiss
Her soul enfranchised, bounded from its thrall;
Its crumbling fetters drooped upon his heart—
The angel was at Home !



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